



NAPA VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) Agenda Memo

TO: Active Transportation Advisory Committee
FROM: Danielle Schmitz, Executive Director
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SUBJECT: Bucks for Bikes Program Guideline Revisions

RECOMMENDATION

That the Napa Valley Transportation Authority (NVTA) Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) review, make comments and approve a recommendation to the NVTA Board of Directors to adopt the revised Bucks for Bikes program Guidelines at their October meeting.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NVTA's V-Commute Program encompasses a range of strategies and programs aimed at influencing travel behavior to achieve outcomes including reduced congestion, reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and promote a more sustainable transportation system for all users. Bucks for Bikes is a current V-Commute program that offers a subsidy to residents of Napa County to buy or maintain a bicycle to use for commuting. The program has been undersubscribed for at least the last five years, and NVTA staff is proposing changes to the Bucks for Bikes Program Guidelines to encourage more use.

BACKGROUND

Under NVTA's existing Countywide Transportation Plan, Goal 5 is to '*Minimize energy and other resources required to move people and goods*' by encouraging, incentivizing, and promoting sustainable transportation options, such as carpool/vanpool, transit, biking, and walking to reduce congestion and decrease emissions caused by mobile sources. One way NVTA strives to achieve this goal is by providing subsidies under the Bucks for Bikes program.

The current Bucks for Bikes program provides up to a \$500 subsidy as a reimbursement for purchase of a bicycle for commuting and requires participants to provide commuter information for one (1) year. Not many people have applied for

the program and received a subsidy over the last five years, as shown below in Table 1.

Table 1: Annual Bucks for Bikes Subsidies by Calendar Year

Year	Number of Subsidy Redemptions
2022	2
2023	3
2024	1
2025	0
2026 (1 st 6-months)	1

At the start of 2026, all V-Commute Programs, including Bucks for Bikes, began being managed by NVTA transit staff, and they are in the process of reviewing and updating all V-Commute Programs. In talking with prospective applicants at NVTA outreach events and discussions with the Napa County Bicycle Coalition, staff reviewed best practices in other similar programs across the country and have identified primary barriers as follows:

- Requirement to pay for the full cost of a bicycle up front and waiting for reimbursement discourages those with lower incomes from participating in the program since low-income individuals are unlikely to have sufficient funds readily available.
- There is strong desire to support expanded availability of e-bikes for residents to choose biking for longer commutes (3-10 miles or more)

Therefore, space staff is looking to address these three issues in an updated set of program guidelines. The updates are summarized below and can be seen in their entirety in Attachment 1.

Eliminating the Need for Reimbursement

Staff recently updated the Taxi Scrip program and created a new program called the Vine UpValley Link program. These new and updated programs have moved away from paper coupons and replaced them with a prepaid debit card (PEX card) to provide subsidies. These prepaid debit cards can be programmed for many uses. With this Bucks for Bikes update, staff are proposing pre-loading PEX cards in advance of purchase to remove the barrier of users funding the purchase up-front and waiting several weeks for reimbursement.

E-Bikes & Low-Income Users

The updated guidelines specifically call out that Class 1 or Class 2 e-bikes are eligible purchases under the program. Guidelines are also updated to provide 100% of bicycle and related equipment/accessory costs up to \$1,000 for those who qualify as low-income based on CalFresh/EBT or Medi-Cal thresholds. This significantly increases the opportunity for low-income users to purchase an e-bike as a potential replacement for a traditional internal combustion vehicle.

Replacing Tracking with Survey

Under the program guidelines, the applicant must agree to report on the days they commute and the use of their bicycle through the V-Commute platform. The revised program guidelines require that applicants complete a survey at 30 and 90 days following purchase to reporting on their use of their bicycle and collect other information to evaluate success of the program. NVTB will incentivize the completion of the post-purchase/repair survey with an additional \$50 for use on bicycle tune-up, maintenance, or accessories.

NVTB will update the Bucks for Bikes Application and create a survey prior to approval of program changes by the NVTB Board.

ATTACHMENTS

- (1) Bucks for Bikes Program Guidelines – Redline Version
- (2) Revised Bucks for Bikes Program Guidelines

Bucks for Bikes

The Bucks for Bikes program is designed to promote and increase bicycle commuting in Napa County. Napa Valley Transportation Authority (NVTa), under the V-Commute program, provides funding towards the purchase price of will fund-commuter bicycles. Subsidy amounts are based upon income levels:

- For all income levels: for 60% of the their costpurchase price the cost of atthe bicycle, up to a maximum of \$500 per bicycle, or up to \$100 toward the repair or maintenance of your current bike.
- For lower income¹: 100% of the purchase price cost of atthe bicycle, up to a maximum of \$1,000 per bicycle, or up to \$100250 toward the repair or maintenance of your current bike

To be eligible for the subsidy, tThe commuter agrees towill track commutecomplete surveys documenting on usage. Survey completion will and to document the results which will result in an additional PEX Card reward of \$2550 annually to be used towards bike maintenance or bike accessories.-

Program Eligibility Guidelines

1. Any Napa resident, employee, or college individual 18 years of age or older who currently resides, is employed, or attends college student 18 years of age or older in Napa County may apply to receive a subsidyn incentive under this program.
2. Qualified applicants will be selected based on a review of the information submitted. Those most likely to use the bicycle or Class 1 or Class 2 e-bike for commuting will be given preference².
3. Each person who receives a bicycle subsidy will agree to keep a commute log and submit periodic reports, on request for the first yearcomplete aan annual survey at the end of the first year showing approximately how much the bicycle is used for commuting to work or collegeschool in or from Napa County.

¹ As determined by eligibility cards for CalFresh/Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card or Medi-Cal.

² Per the California Vehicle Code as Class 1 e-bike “Provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 mph”, a Class 2 “Operates via pedal-assist or throttle and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 mph”, and a Class 3 “Provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 28 mph”

4. ~~Incentives Subsidies~~ are limited to one purchase per person.
5. Bicycles must be purchased from a licensed bicycle retailer; no two-party agreements will be reimbursed.
6. Applicants must get a quote for the bicycle they intend to purchase or for maintenance from a retailer of their choice and include it in the application.
7. Purchase. Once the application is approved, the applicant will receive a prepaid PEX debit card with the , approved amount. the The subsidy will be 60% of the price for the bicycle or repair (up to \$500/\$1,000³* for bike purchase, and up to \$100-250 for repair).

~~—————*Funding is limited and available on a first-come, first-serve basis.~~

~~The prepaid debit card will be programed to only work at the retailer from whom the quote was received. (Internet estimates will not be accepted since a visit to a bike retailer is educational and necessary to determine bike size and features).~~

~~If selected to receive a subsidy,~~

How to Apply

1. ~~Visit a Napa Valley bicycle retailer and select~~Select the bicycle you plan to purchase. ~~(Internet quotes will not be accepted since a visit to a bike retailer is educational and necessary to determine bike size and features.)~~
2. Have the bicycle retailer ~~provide write~~ a quote for a new bike or bike repair. A new bicycle ~~helmet or lockhelmet, lock, or another bike accessory~~ can be included in the quote.
3. Send quote and request for incentive subsidy to support@vcommute.org
4. Following approval of the application by V-Commute staff, ~~purchase your bicycle or have your bicycle serviced and email the original receipt to V-Commute for review and processing you will receive in the mail a prepaid PEX debit card to use for your purchase at the retailer that provided the quote. If the cost of the bicycle is more than the approved amount the applicant is responsible for making up the difference. The retailer will then need to split the cost and run two transactions.~~ We may

³ Funding is limited and available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

contact you requesting additional information or the retailer to verify purchase details.

~~5. Within 14 days of approval and receipt of all required information, V-Commute will process a reimbursement check to the address registered on your V-Commute account. Processing of checks is completed by the County of Napa, and may take an additional 2-3 weeks.~~

Bucks for Bikes Commuter Bicycle ~~Subsidy Incentive~~ Program

NVTA V-Commute
625 Burnell Street
Napa, CA 94559

Email: support@vcommute.org

Other important information

If selected to receive a subsidy, you may purchase a ~~different bicycle~~bicycle different than the one submitted for the quote from the same retailer, however the subsidy will never be more than the budgeted amount, which was determined by the submitted quote. ~~The subsidy will be 60% of the price (up to \$500) of the bicycle purchased, but cannot be more than what was budgeted.~~ Reimbursement will be for the bicycle ~~or bicycle~~ and ~~helmet or lock~~bicycle accessories, not for sales tax or accessories (ex. Water bottles, bags, tools etc.).

~~At 30 days and 90 days after the purchase, the applicant will receive a survey via email and/or mobile phone. Everyone who received the subsidy is encouraged to respond and upon response an additional one-time \$25-50 will be loaded to the same prepaid debit card to be used for bicycle-related accessories, equipment, or maintenance at a list of local bicycle shops on the Napa Valley.~~

V-Commute Bucks for Bikes Program Guidelines

The Bucks for Bikes program is designed to promote and increase bicycle commuting in Napa County. Napa Valley Transportation Authority (NVTa), under the V-Commute program, provides funding towards the purchase price of commuter bicycles¹ and related bicycle maintenance and accessories. Subsidy amounts are based upon income levels:

- Bicycle Purchase – Qualified lower-income individuals²: 100% of the purchase price of a bicycle and related accessories, up to a maximum of \$1,000 per bicycle
- Bicycle Purchase – All other individuals: 60% of the purchase price of a bicycle and related accessories, up to a maximum of \$500 per bicycle
- Bicycle Repair – All individuals: Up to \$250 toward the repair of an existing commuter bicycle, and related accessories.

To be eligible for the subsidy, the commuter agrees to complete two surveys documenting usage at approximately 30 days and 90 days following bicycle purchase or repair. Completion of both surveys will result in an additional \$50 reward to be used for bicycle tune-ups, maintenance, or related accessories.

Program Eligibility Guidelines

1. Any individual 18 years of age or older who currently resides, is employed, or attends college in Napa County may apply for this program.
2. Qualified applicants will be selected based on a review of information submitted. Those most likely to use bicycles for commuting or other activities that would replace vehicle trips will be given preference.
3. Each person who receives a bicycle subsidy will agree to complete a survey approximately 30 days and 90 days following purchase or repair. Information from the survey will be used to analyze program impact and alignment with agency goals.
4. Purchase subsidies are limited to one purchase per person.

¹ Per the California Vehicle Code as Class 1 e-bike “Provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 mph”, a Class 2 “Operates via pedal-assist or throttle and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 mph. Class 3 bicycles, scooters, or other e-mobility devices are not eligible for this program.

² As determined by eligibility cards for CalFresh/Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card or Medi-Cal.

5. Bicycles must be purchased from a licensed bicycle retailer; no two-party agreements will be reimbursed.
6. Applicants must get a quote for the bicycle they intend to purchase or for maintenance from a retailer of their choice and include it in the application.
7. Once the application is approved, the applicant will receive a prepaid PEX debit card with the subsidy amount shown on the quote.³

The prepaid debit card will be programmed to only work at the retailer from whom the quote was received.

How to Apply

1. Select the bicycle you plan to purchase.
2. Have the bicycle retailer provide a quote for a new bike or bike repair. A new bicycle helmet, lock, light, bag/panniers, or other accessories must be included in the quote to be eligible for program funding.
3. Send a copy of the quote and completed Bucks for Bikes application to support@vcommute.org, or mail hard copies to:

Bucks for Bikes Program

Napa Valley Transportation Authority
625 Burnell Street
Napa, CA 94559

4. Following approval by program staff, you will receive an email confirmation followed by a prepaid PEX debit card sent via USPS to use for your purchase at the retailer that provided the quote.

Other important information

If selected to receive a subsidy, you may purchase a bicycle or accessories different than the one submitted for the quote from the same retailer, however the subsidy received will

³ Funding is limited and available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

never be for more than the approved amount, which was determined based upon the submitted quote. Reimbursement will be for the bicycle and bicycle accessories.

If the cost of the bicycle is more than the approved amount, the applicant is responsible for any difference. The retailer will then need to split the cost and run two transactions. We may contact you requesting additional information or the retailer to verify purchase details.

At 30 days and 90 days after the purchase, the applicant will receive a survey via email and/or mobile phone. Everyone who received the subsidy is encouraged to respond and upon response an additional one-time \$50 will be loaded on the prepaid debit card to be used for bicycle-related accessories, equipment, or maintenance.